GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3572
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2001
GRANT OF VISAS AND WORK PERMITS TO PROFESSIONALS
K. MURALEEDHARAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made/likely to make any suggestion to the WTO for the formulation of multilateral guidelines and administrative procedures for grant of Visas and Works permits for professionals travelling to other countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI U. V. KRISHNAM RAJU)

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India has submitted a paper on liberalisation of movement of professionals in the Special Session of Council for Trade in Services (CTS) in the WTO. The paper suggests alternative approaches and strategies for bringing about effective market access in Mode 4 of Modes of Supply of Services under GATS, which is of primary interest to developing countries, including India. The paper has proposed introduction of GATS visas to facilitate the movement of personnel to the extent of the commitments given by the member countries. It notes that the existing commitments are largely linked to commercial presence, which is of very limited use to developing countries, which are interested primarily in the movement of independent professionals and other skilled persons. The paper aims at improving the structure of commitments taken on by the developed countries and removal of existing limitations as are imposed through measures such as Economic Needs Tests, Administrative Procedures relating to visa and Work Permits, Norms relating to Social Security issues, and norms and disciplines on Recognition of Qualifications.